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FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

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1885

BOARD OF HEALTH

OF THE

CITY OF MANCHESTER,

FOR

THE YEAR 1885.



MANCHESTER, N. H.:

JOHN B. CLARKE, PRINTER.

1886.



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BOARD OF HEALTH.

AS ORGANIZED FEB. 1, 1886.

WILLIAM A. WEBSTER, M. D., *President*, term expires
February, 1888.

GEORGE C. HOITT, M. D., term expires February, 1887.

JOSEPH B. SAWYER, C. E., *Clerk*, term expires February,
1889.

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF HEALTH.

To His Honor the Mayor:—

The Board of Health respectfully presents its first annual report, being for the year 1885.

The members of the board were, in the early part of the year, appointed as health officers under the general statutes of the state. We at once entered upon the discharge of our duties, and gave much time and attention to the prevention and abatement of nuisances. But a brief experience convinced us of what indeed we had before suspected, that the provisions of the general statutes, admirably comprehensive and well adapted to the needs of the smaller towns and villages, were in some important respects insufficient for a city of the size of Manchester. It was seen that the sanitary affairs of the city should be put under the care of a more permanent board, which would be able to avail itself of the knowledge and experience gained in previous years. It was also thought that the powers of such a board should be extended in express terms over various matters and things of which the control of the health officers was in some degree doubtful and uncertain.

With the approbation and assistance of your Honor

and of several citizens interested in sanitary matters, prominent among whom we would mention George C. Gilmore, Esq., one of the representatives from this city, a special act of the legislature was obtained to establish a board of health for the city and to define its powers and duties. This act is as follows: —

SECTION 1. The mayor shall appoint three health officers, one of whom shall hold office for one year from the first Monday in February, eighteen hundred and eighty-five, one for two years, and one for three years, from said first Monday in February, who shall constitute a board of health, and annually hereafter, in the month of January in each year, he shall appoint one member to said board, who shall hold office for three years from the first Monday in February succeeding. In case of a vacancy occurring in said board, the mayor shall appoint some person for the remainder of the unexpired term.

SECT. 2. The board shall enter upon its duties on the first Monday in February, annually. Said board shall organize by the choice of one of its members as chairman and another as clerk, and they may adopt such rules and regulations for their own and the government of all subordinate officers by them employed, as they may deem expedient, not repugnant to the laws of the state, and the said board shall receive such compensation for their services as the city councils may determine.

SECT. 3. The board of health hereby constituted shall have and exercise all the powers invested in, and shall perform all the duties prescribed to, health officers of towns under the statutes, and shall have power to appoint such sanitary inspectors as they may deem necessary, and define their duties, term of service, and fix their compensation; provided, that the whole amount of such compensation shall not exceed the amount appropriated therefor by the city councils; and said inspectors so appointed shall be responsible to the board and under its control and direction; and it shall be the duty of said inspectors, under the direction of said board, to enforce the laws of the state, the ordinances of said city, and the regulations of

said board relative to health, and make a report to said board, in writing, of all acts done by them as such inspectors, once each month.

SECT. 4. The board of health, when satisfied upon due examination that a building, tenement, room, or cellar in said city, occupied as a dwelling-place or a workshop, has become, by reason of the number of occupants, want of cleanliness, unsuitable drainage, lack of privy accommodations, or from any other cause, unfit for a dwelling-place or workshop, may issue a notice in writing to such occupants, or to the owner or agent in charge, to cause the same to be put in a proper sanitary condition; and in case said premises shall not be put in such proper sanitary condition within a reasonable time after such notice, then said board may notify the occupants, in writing, to quit the premises in such time as the board shall deem necessary.

SECT. 5. The board, after such reasonable notice, and the neglect and refusal of the occupant, owner, or agent to put the premises into such proper sanitary condition, may close up said premises, and, if the owner or agent thereafter occupies, or knowingly permits others to occupy, such closed premises, without the written permission of the board, he shall be fined not less than ten or more than fifty dollars for each offense.

SECT. 6. The board of health shall, within certain limits which they may establish from time to time, and which shall include the compact part of the city, have control of the cleaning of privy-vaults and barns and stable cellars, and none shall be opened or cleaned without the permission of the board, nor by any other person, nor in any other manner, nor at any other time, than as said board may direct. They may, within said limits, prohibit the keeping of swine, the construction or continuance of privy-vaults, unless the same shall be more than forty feet away from any dwelling-house, shop, or public street, and is vaulted six feet deep, thoroughly built of brick or stone laid in cement, and sufficiently secured, inclosed, and ventilated, and shall be a separate and special inclosure, and not a part of the cellar of a barn or stable.

SECT. 7. The board may prepare and enforce such regulations

as they may deem necessary for the safety and health of the people, relative to the drainage of buildings and connections with public sewers when such sewer is within one hundred feet of the premises to be drained.

SECT. 8. If any person shall neglect to comply with the provisions of this act, or the regulations of said board, he shall be punished by a fine not less than ten or more than fifty dollars.

SECT. 9. This act shall take effect on its passage.

This act was approved July 23, 1885, and on the 30th the members of the board were appointed and qualified as follows:—

Joseph B. Sawyer, for one year.

George C. Hoitt, for two years.

William A. Webster, for three years.

The board was organized by the choice of William A. Webster as chairman, and J. B. Sawyer as clerk, and the same membership and organization have been continued to the present time.

PRIVY-VAULTS.

The most numerous class of complaints made to the board is that in relation to the bad condition of privy-vaults. There are great numbers of such vaults in the compact part of the city. A large majority of them are not built in conformity to the requirements of law, and most of them are dangerous and disgusting nuisances. It has been the policy of this board, during its brief existence, to discountenance and prevent, as far as practicable, the building or the continuance of these structures. This line of policy will be continued, and all owners of buildings are earnestly requested to substitute water-closets or earth-closets wherever it is at all practicable. Wherever a good sewer is within reach, no more money should be spent in the building or rebuilding of vaults.

In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the act above cited, at a meeting of the board held August 31, it was ordered that the following limits be established, within which this board assumes control of the cleaning of privy-vaults and barn and stable cellars, and within which the keeping of swine is hereby prohibited after the first day of November, 1885, viz.:—

“Beginning at the east end of Amoskeag Falls bridge and running thence easterly in the highway to the River road, thence northerly on said road to Ray brook, thence easterly by said brook to Union street, thence southerly in Union street to Gore street, thence easterly in Gore street to Russell street, thence southerly in Russell street to Orange street, thence easterly in Orange street to Linden street, thence southerly in Linden street to Bridge street, thence easterly in Bridge street to Beacon street, thence southerly in Beacon street to Spruce street, thence westerly in Spruce street to Massabesic street, thence westerly by the Cemetery brook to Beech street, thence southerly in Beech street to Young street, thence westerly in Young street to Elm street, thence northerly in Elm street to Cove street, thence westerly in Cove street to Merrimack river, thence southwesterly to the mouth of the Piscataquog river, thence northwesterly by the Piscataquog river to a point where School street, otherwise called Temple street, extended westerly in a straight line would strike said river, thence easterly by said extended line of School street to the point where Dubuque street, if extended southerly in a straight line, would intersect said School street, thence northerly by said extended line of Dubuque street to a point twelve hundred feet north of the center of Amory street, thence easterly and at right angles to the last described line to Merrimack river, thence northerly by said river to the place of beginning.”

The control of the cleaning of vaults had heretofore been conferred by an ordinance on the city marshal, and, as we understand it, this ordinance is still in force in all parts of the city outside of the above limits. Within these limits the control thus far exercised has been limited to the granting of a written permit for each vault opened, and to the refusal of such permits to all persons who had in any way made their work unsatisfactory to the public or to this board.

The work has been done in the night time, with ladles and closed wagons, no change having as yet been made in the regulations upon this subject, but the matter is under consideration, and some improvements will probably be made the coming season.

THE KEEPING OF SWINE.

This practice was in the former part of the year a source of great annoyance and complaint. The order of August 31 prohibited the keeping of swine in the compact part of the city after the first day of November last. This order was very generally approved by the public as reasonable and proper, and was readily complied with by many of our people. But as at the time when the order went into effect, and indeed up to a recent date, one member of the board was sick, the time and attention of another was mostly occupied in the quarantine against small-pox, and that of the remaining member was being devoted in a far greater degree than the salary would warrant to the ordinary duties of the board, and as no money was available for the pay of an inspector, very little has been done in the way of enforcing compliance with the order. It is the intention of the board to take up the subject again at an early day.

NUISANCES ABATED.

No itemized account of the number of these has been kept. Probably about 250 complaints have been received, and we think that at least an equal number of cases has engaged our attention of which no complaint has reached us. These nuisances consist in part of privies and vaults badly kept, unventilated, overflowing, wrongly located, or out of repair; of sink-water nuisances, swine and other animals improperly kept, dead animals left in the outskirts of the town without burial, filthy yards and cellars, bad well-water, loads of bones, offal, and swill carried through the streets in an unlawful manner, etc. We have done what we could to remedy these evils, but hardly a beginning has been made. The work can never be done as it should be without a more liberal expenditure of time than can be afforded by three men who have to depend on their private business for the principal part of their income. To personally inspect the larger part of these nuisances, to find out their owners and order them to remove the cause of trouble, and then to follow up each case and make sure that this order is complied with, and to attend to the more general duties, such as those relating to contagious diseases, purity of water supply, defective sewerage, etc., is to do more work than most men can afford for two hundred dollars a piece. The board should have the means of paying a good man for his whole time and attention.

SMALL-POX.

There have been five cases of this disease and one of varioloid in the city during the year. All these occurred in one family of immigrants from Canada, who had shortly before passed through Montreal on their way to this place. The first one was reported to this board as a possible case

by Dr. Lanouette, on Friday, September 4. The physicians of the board immediately saw it, and, deeming it a probable case, ordered the family isolated and vaccinated. The patient was a boy. Two other boys were then sickening with what soon proved to be same disease.

The isolation was at once enforced by the police department, but we afterwards learned from Dr. Lanouette that the order for vaccination was not complied with. On Sunday, the 6th, the symptoms in the first case became unequivocal, and the family was removed to the pest-house, and their tenement and household goods were fumigated. The two other children of the family soon developed the disease, and the mother was attacked with varioloid. Three of the children died. The surviving members of the family, including the father, who did not have the disease, were in due time properly cleansed and discharged from the pest-house. The tenement in which the disease appeared was thoroughly disinfected and renovated, and thus the disease disappeared from the city. A number of rumors of other outbreaks came to our knowledge, but on investigation all of them were found to be false alarms.

VACCINATION.

On September 5 the board, by appointment of your Honor, met yourself and Mr. A. G. Fairbanks, county commissioner, in consultation on the subject of vaccination at the public expense for those who could not well afford to pay for that operation for themselves. It was agreed that such vaccination should be provided, and that one half of the expense should be borne by the city and one half by the county. The best bovine virus was to be used exclusively, and to be provided at the joint expense of the city and county. Some other details of the work

were agreed upon, and the Mayor was to arrange for carrying the plan into effect. Under this arrangement 3,582 persons were vaccinated at the public expense, and the results were highly satisfactory. The cost was about \$1,220.

A general vaccination of the operatives on the different corporations was also ordered by the respective agents, and was, as we are informed, thoroughly carried out. A large number of persons were also vaccinated at their own expense. To these measures and other precautions hereafter mentioned, our success in avoiding an epidemic of small-pox is undoubtedly due. Such an epidemic would have cost in money and loss of business, to say nothing of life, many times the amount spent in precautionary measures.

One of the most remarkable things with which we have met is the occasional opposition to vaccination. Persons who will believe any number of marvels at the bidding of quacks and impostors, will ignorantly or obstinately reject the proved truth of vaccination. "Alike in rejecting what is known and believing what is preposterous, the rights of private foolishness assert themselves." The law of the state should make vaccination compulsory.

DISINFECTION AND VACCINATION OF IMMIGRANTS FROM CANADA.

During the summer and autumn our attention was continually turned to the liability of an invasion of small-pox from Canada. About the last of September we became convinced that the quarantine work of the United States authorities on the Canadian frontier was not such as the exigency required, and your Honor and Dr. Hoitt visited Concord and held a consultation on the subject with Dr. Watson, secretary of the state board of health.

The result was that our feeling of insecurity was increased, and it was determined to institute measures of our own. Accordingly a place was fitted up for the purpose at the depot, and a thorough inspection and fumigation of the persons and baggage of travelers and immigrants from the infected districts were commenced. This, of course, did not include those who went directly through to other places, but only those who stopped temporarily or permanently in the city. It was maintained from October 3 to December 25, at which last date the disease had so far abated its ravages in Canada that it was judged prudent to discontinue the service. During this time the whole number of persons intercepted and fumigated was 1,260. Of these, 421 were known to have come from infected districts, many of them from houses in which the disease existed, and some of them even from the nursing of those sick with it.

The number of trunks fumigated was 431; bags, 265; boxes, 102. The number of persons vaccinated was 75.

Many of the boxes were large and heavy, containing housekeeping goods and provisions. The vaccination appeared to have been pretty thoroughly done by the government medical officers on the border.

The cost of this service was about \$850. We believe this money was well spent, for, notwithstanding the constant intercourse of our people with the infected towns, the disease did not appear in the city after the service was established. The work was done under the care of Dr. Hoitt, who desires to acknowledge his obligations to J. W. Hildreth, Esq., station agent of the Concord Railroad, and to the other officers and employes at the depot, for every reasonable assistance and facility.

OTHER PESTILENTIAL DISEASES.

The table of mortality shows that much is to be feared from other contagious and infectious diseases. In the early part of the year there was an epidemic of measles. During the year this disease caused 36 deaths. Scarlet fever caused 5; diphtheria, 18; typhoid fever, 20; and cerebro-spinal fever, 8. Total for these five diseases, 87, just twenty-nine times as many as by small-pox. How many cases of these diseases there were which ended by recovery we have no means of knowing. There were undoubtedly several times as many.

It is beyond controversy that this amount of sickness and death might have been much reduced by reasonable and comparatively inexpensive isolation and disinfection. With this end in view, the board sent to each physician in the city the following circular, accompanying it in each case with postal cards printed with blanks for their convenience in making the asked-for reports:—

MANCHESTER, N. H., September 4, 1885.

The Board of Health desires to obtain prompt and definite information of each and every case of dangerous pestilential disease occurring in this city, so that a correct record of such diseases may be kept, the bad localities ascertained, and that proper measures may be taken to protect the public health.

In this connection attention is called to the following provision of the statutes of New Hampshire:—

It shall be the duty of every physician who attends upon any person affected with the small-pox, the malignant cholera, or any other malignant pestilential disease, to *immediately* report the same to the health officers or the selectmen of the town; and if any physician shall neglect so to do, he shall forfeit the sum of one hundred dollars, to be recovered by such health officers or selectmen in the name of the town. — *General Laws, Chap. 112, Sect. 3.*

The following named diseases are considered by this board to be *malignant and pestilential*, and within the meaning of the section above quoted, viz. : —

Asiatic cholera, cerebro-spinal meningitis, small-pox or varioloid, typhus fever, typhoid fever, scarlet fever, diphtheria.

And any physician finding a case of either of them in his practice within the city limits is requested to fill out one of the accompanying blanks and to transmit it to the board without delay.

WM. A. WEBSTER,
GEO. C. HOITT,
JOSEPH B. SAWYER,

Board of Health of the City of Manchester.

The net result of this effort for four months is nineteen cases of sickness reported, viz., six of diphtheria, four of scarlet fever, and nine of typhoid fever; and some of these were not reported until the patient had recovered. Only ten of our sixty physicians have made any reports. This shows either a very gratifying state of the public health, or great negligence on the part of the physicians in a matter in which they are gravely responsible to the public.

We have recently prepared a circular giving some suggestions as to isolation and disinfection in cases of diphtheria and scarlet fever. This circular is to be placed in every house where these diseases are known to exist.

LAKE MASSABESIC.

One of the objects of our care has been to coöperate with the water commissioners and their superintendent in preserving the purity of our water supply. We have made several visits to the lake, and have caused two privies which contaminated water draining into it to be removed and the danger from several minor sources to be obviated.

It behooves the people of Manchester to exercise through

their constituted authorities an ever increasing vigilance for the safety and purity of this water. Its uses as a place of summer resort and for fishing should be made secondary to its uses for water supply.

WELL-WATER.

There are a large number of wells still in use in the city. In our sandy soil, underlaid as it is at no great depth by an impervious clayey stratum, such wells must be looked upon with great suspicion. In the older parts of the city they are almost certain to be contaminated by leakages from privy-vaults and house-drains. Water from such wells, even when it brings no specific disease, is pernicious, and to those who have not by long use acquired a taste for filth, it is disgusting. But such water is known to be one of the chief vehicles for the spread of typhoid fever and cholera, and circumstances may arise in which it will be the duty of this board to summarily close many of these wells.

THE POND ON HANOVER SQUARE.

During the past summer this body of water again, as usual, became a nuisance. In the early spring the water had been drawn off and the basin was thoroughly cleaned under the direction of the Committee on Commons, in the hope that it would go through the summer without causing trouble. But about the 20th of July the water suddenly became filled with a low form of aquatic vegetation which quickly decayed, evolving a great deal of foul odor. On the 25th, in answer to the complaints of those residing about the square, the board ordered the pond drawn off. We had some fears that the empty basin exposed to the summer sun might prove a source of danger

and sickness ; but, owing probably to the thorough spring cleaning, these fears were not realized.

About September 20, it was thought that the basin might again be filled, and the gate was shut down. But the pond filled slowly, and after several days, when it was about half full, the trouble reappeared and the water was again drawn off. It so remained until the cool weather and copious rains of autumn rendered it possible to again fill the basin without creating a nuisance.

The future of this pond is not difficult to foresee. It will be drained and filled with earth, and a sewer will be built for the rivulet which now feeds it. The sooner this is done the better. There is no reason to hope that in coming summers the pond will be any cleaner or more wholesome than in the past. On the contrary, there is every reason to expect it to grow worse. Its room is better than its company, and it should be abolished without delay. When this is done, we believe the same trouble will appear to an equal or greater degree in the pond on Merimack square, and then that also must be given up.

Experience here and elsewhere has abundantly demonstrated that a small brook running through a compact and populous town will inevitably become foul and offensive.

MORTUARY STATISTICS.

This is a matter which is not by law committed to the care of this board, but as the study of the number of deaths and their causes is so closely connected with sanitary work, we shall need make no apology for introducing the following table. The registration law of New Hampshire requires that all returns of births, marriages, and deaths occurring in the city shall be made to the city clerk, who shall record the same, and, in the case of death, shall

grant a permit for burial; and no interment of the dead body of any human being shall be made without such a permit. It thus happens that the city clerk's record contains the names not only of all who die in the city, some few of whom are buried in other places, but also of a considerable number who, residing and dying abroad, are brought here for burial. These are generally members of families which once lived here and still own family burial places in our cemeteries, or else residents of neighboring towns who have purchased burial lots here. By some oversight, the record as heretofore kept does not state the place of death, and thus the mortality of the city is made to appear larger than it really is. The record for the last year shows 827 entries. Fifty-six of these are thought to be names of persons who lived and died in other places and whose remains were brought here for interment. This leaves the actual mortality of the year at 771, including still-births, as is the custom of our state registrar. Reckoning out the still-births, as appears to be the general practice of other cities, the mortality is 733. Estimating the population of the city at 38,000, the death-rate is by the one method 20.29, and by the other 19.29, per thousand.

In the following table the classification is, perhaps, not very scientific, but it is the best that can be done with such returns as are made. For convenience of comparison, it follows very closely that of the state registrar.

TABLE SHOWING THE MORTALITY OF THE CITY BY DISEASES AND BY MONTHS FOR THE YEAR 1885, COMPILED FROM THE RECORDS IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Totals.
Small-pox.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	3
Measles.....	..	1	6	13	10	3	2	..	..	..	1	..	36
Scarlet Fever.....	1	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	5
Diphtheria.....	7	..	1	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	5	2	18
Quinsy.....	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Croup.....	2	2	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	2	1	2	12
Whooping Cough.....	..	..	..	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	1	..	11
Typhoid Fever.....	2	..	1	3	4	4	..	2	..	..	1	1	20
Erysipelas.....	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Puerperal Fever.....	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	3
Carbuncle.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Dysentery.....	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Diarrhea.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	2
Cholera Infantum.....	..	..	..	2	1	1	52	23	6	1	..	3	89
Rheumatism.....	2	..	4	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	9
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis.....	..	..	..	1	1	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	8
Cholera Morbus.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	2
Septicæmia.....	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	4
Privation and Neglect.....	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Dropsy and Anæmia.....	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	..	..	..	1	12
Cancer.....	2	..	1	3	1	1	2	..	2	..	2	1	15
Scrofula.....	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	4
Tabes Mesenterica.....	1	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Phthisis.....	9	10	8	10	10	7	9	4	7	9	5	5	93
Hydrocephalus.....	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2
Apoplexy.....	2	1	1	1	1	..	..	2	1	2	..	2	13
Paralysis.....	4	6	2	1	..	1	1	4	2	1	3	1	26
Insanity.....	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	3
Epilepsy.....	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Convulsions.....	..	3	2	3	1	3	..	1	1	2	2	4	22
Meningitis.....	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	1	..	1	4
Brain Disease.....	1	2	..	4	..	1	1	2	1	2	..	..	14
Spinal Disease.....	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Neuralgia.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Heart Disease.....	..	2	2	3	1	1	2	1	3	3	2	3	23
Hemorrhage.....	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Capillary Bronchitis.....	3	..	1	..	2	3	1	1	..	..	2	2	15
Bronchitis.....	1	1	1	6	..	..	1	..	..	2	2	..	14
Pneumonia.....	7	5	6	6	3	2	2	..	1	2	4	4	42
Pleurisy.....	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	2
Asthma.....	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Gastritis.....	..	..	1	..	2	1	3	1	1	..	..	2	11
Enteritis.....	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	3
Peritonitis.....	4	..	2	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	10
Ascites.....	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Ulceration of Intestines.....	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
Hernia.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Intussusception.....	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	3
Stomach Disease.....	..	2	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	4
Colic.....	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
Hepatitis.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Jaundice.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	1
Liver Disease.....	..	2	1	..	1	1	1	..	1	..	1	1	9
Nephritis.....	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	2

TABLE SHOWING THE MORTALITY, ETC., IN THE CITY, — *Continued.*

CAUSE OF DEATH.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Totals.
Bright's Disease.....	1	4	...	...	...	3	2	...	...	1	...	...	11
Kidney Disease.....	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	4
Prostatitis.....	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Disease of Uterus.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Abscess.....	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	3
Tumor.....	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Still-born.....	3	3	4	5	2	1	4	4	2	4	3	3	38
Premature Birth.....	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	2
Malformation.....	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Teething.....	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	1	1	...	7
Child-birth.....	...	1	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Old Age.....	4	3	4	1	2	...	...	2	2	...	...	1	19
Atrophy and Debility.....	2	2	1	2	...	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	20
Marasmus.....	...	2	...	...	3	3	1	2	...	...	...	1	12
Burns and Scalds.....	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	7
Drowning.....	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	...	2	1	...	...	6
Sunstroke.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Accidents, not classed.....	...	...	2	...	...	1	...	3	...	...	...	1	7
Suicide.....	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Cause not reported.....	4	5	2	1	2	...	2	4	...	2	3	2	27
Totals.....	70	68	62	77	64	57	106	80	43	47	50	47	771

Number of deaths from zymotic diseases . . . 231

Total deaths of children under five years of age . 312

DIARRHEAL DISEASES.

Under five years of age 92

Above five years of age 5

— 97

Respectfully submitted.

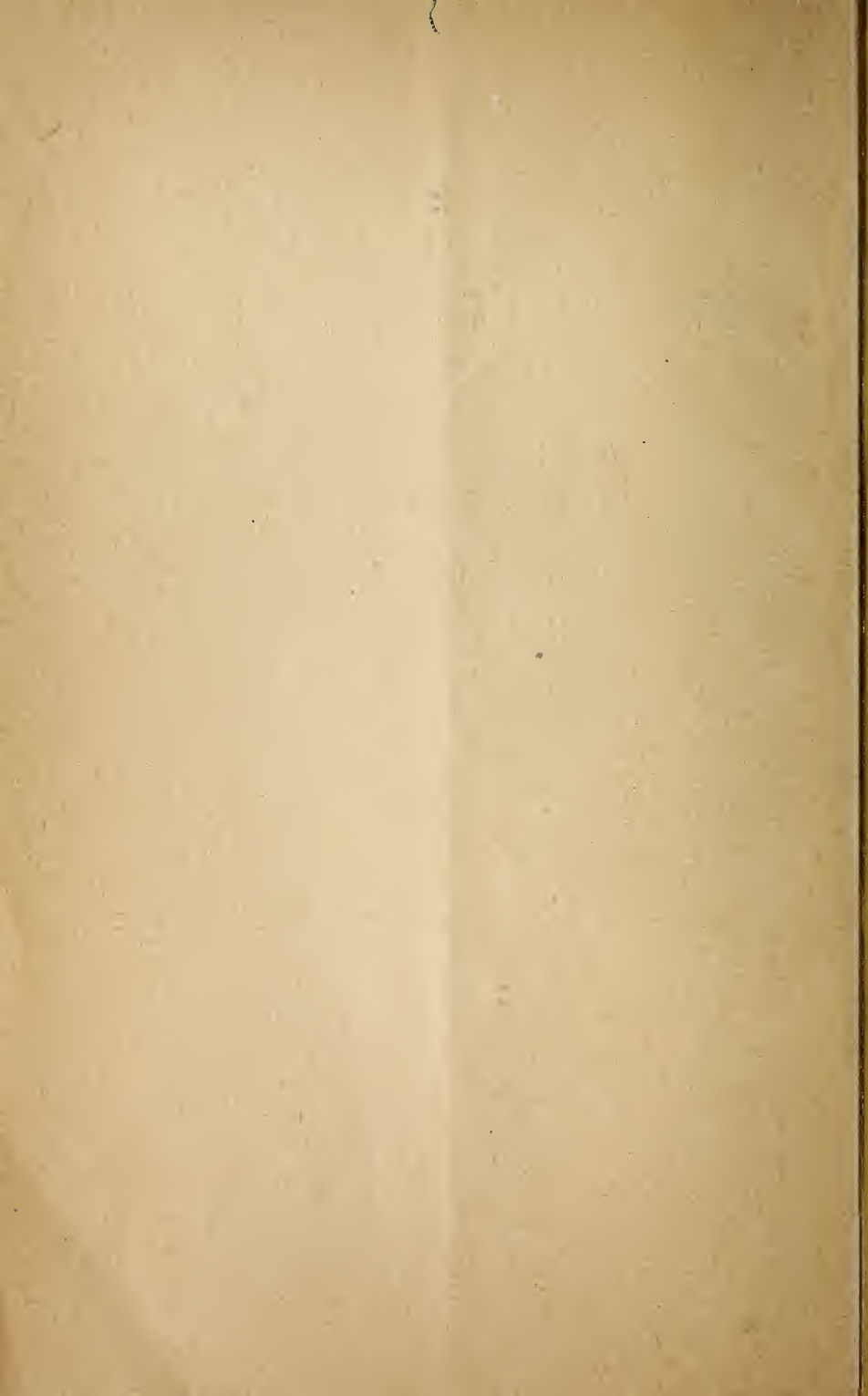
WILLIAM A. WEBSTER,

GEORGE C. HOITT,

JOSEPH B. SAWYER,

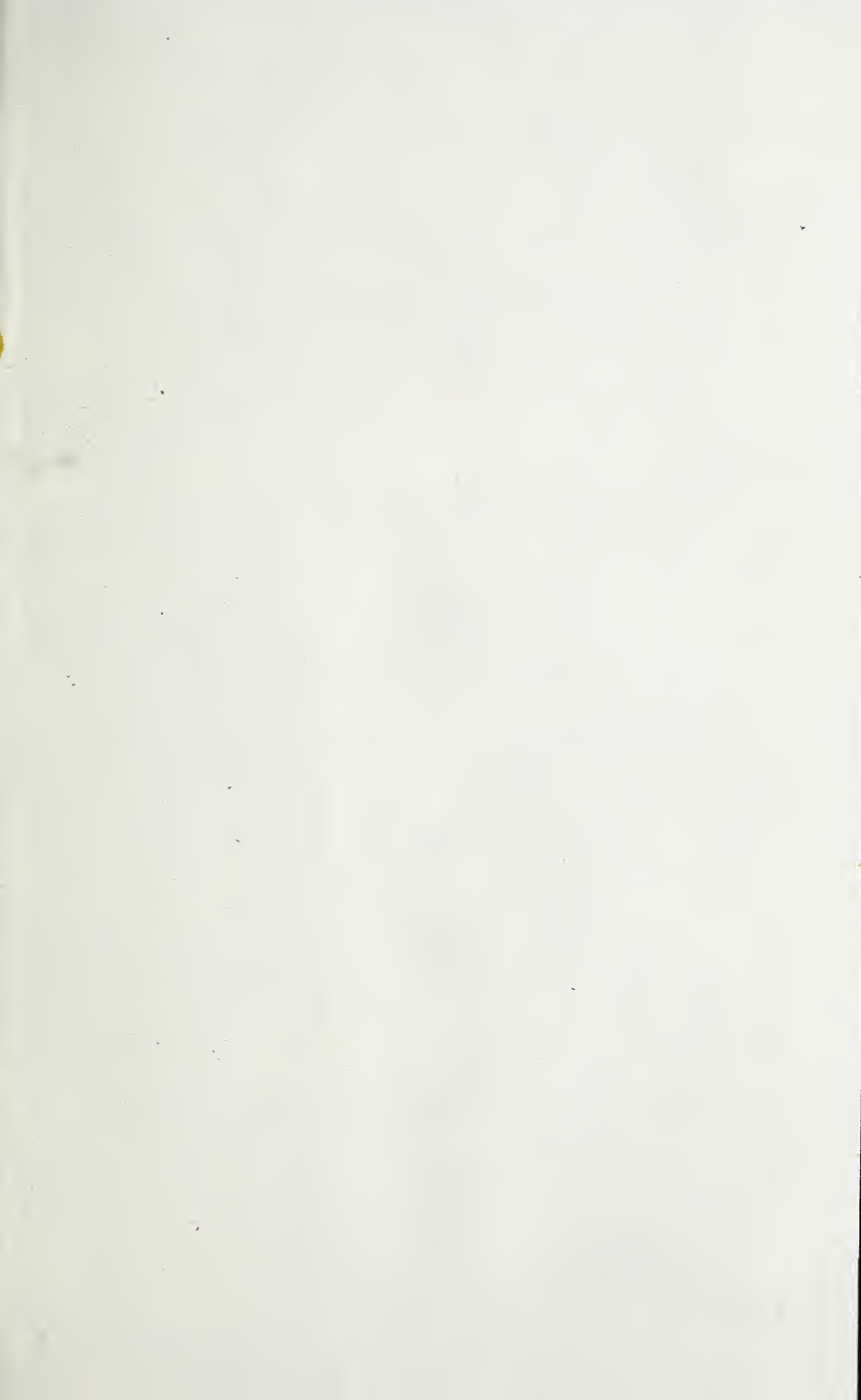
Board of Health.

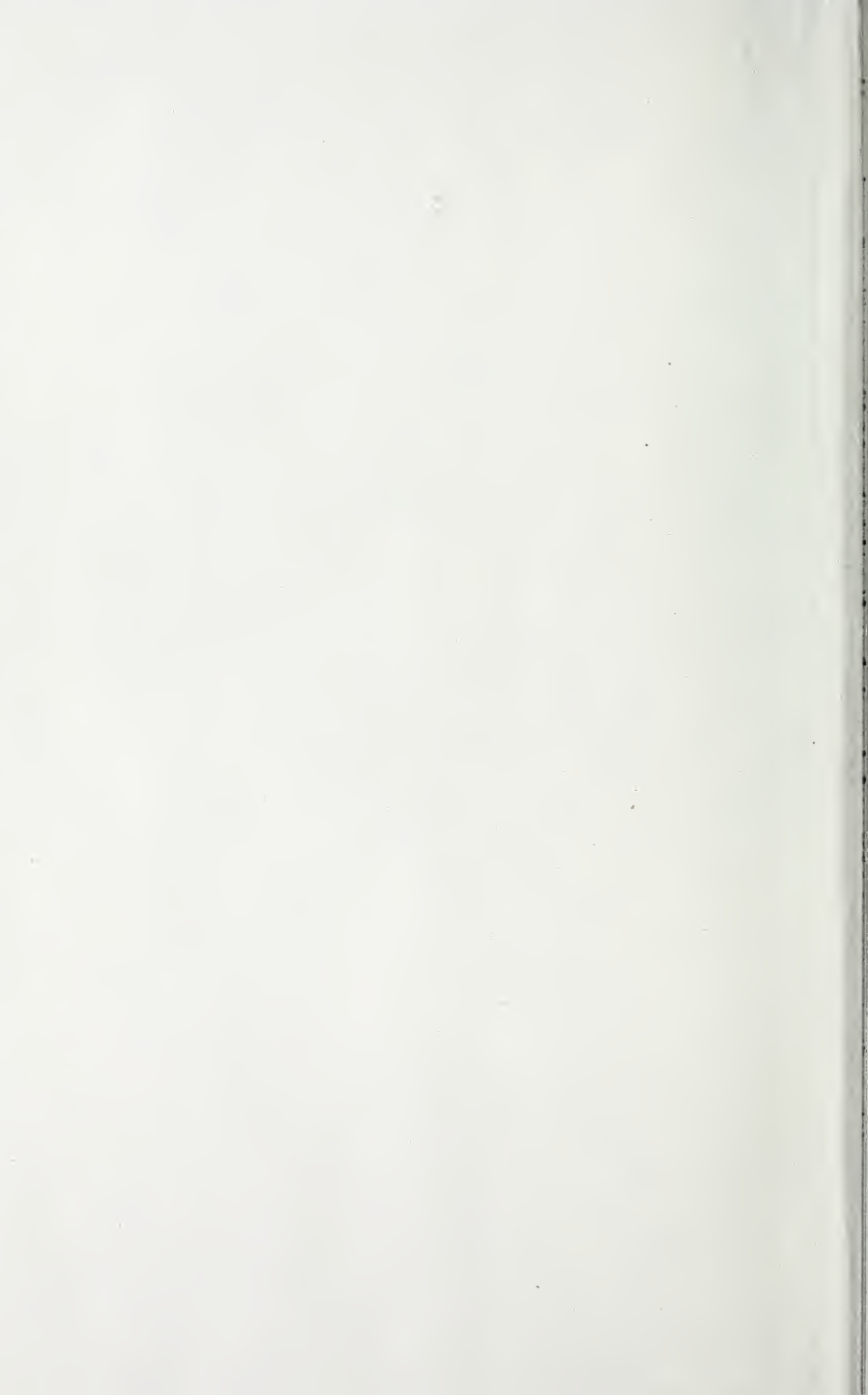
MANCHESTER, N. H., Jan. 1, 1886.











The HF Group

Indiana Plant

067049 2 45 00



8/22/2006

